

NASCC Washington Update: September 16, 2005

Washington Conservation Corps sends crews to assist in hurricane relief. Director Rob Spath reports that WCC staff member Roland McGill traveled to Atlanta last week to meet with CNCS and FEMA representatives. As a result, seven crews (40 staff and corpsmembers) will begin work next week. Special thanks to Rob and his team for leading the way as corps consider additional support to the relief effort! NASCC Corps have engaged in disaster relief and recovery for over twenty years and have the expertise necessary to play a significant role. NASCC has offered to coordinate a national project sending multiple teams to the region to provide a labor force to support immediate relief efforts and to engage with national service leadership in considering the establishment of a regional Civilian Conservation Corps designed to enroll local young people in the long term restoration of communities and the environment while also providing a way for corpsmembers to gain the skills necessary to be successful in the workplace and in life. In addition to assistance to the affected areas, we anticipate the enrollment of young men and women displaced by the hurricane in existing Corps programs.

WA Conservation Corps En Route to Mississippi Posted: Friday, September 23, 2005

Armed with chain saws, tarps, and generators, members of the Washington Conservation Corps are heading to Mississippi to help rebuild homes damaged by Hurricane Katrina. Rob Spath leads the team of 24 which left Thursday for Biloxi. He says one of the biggest challenges will be getting homeowners to accept the help the Corps can offer:

Spath: "I think it's a trust issue I really do. I think its very scary for them to be approached by strangers number one. I think these people are going through change in so many different ways that they are just not able to handle it all sometimes."

Conservation Corps workers also helped hurricane victims last year in Florida. Spath expects to have rotating crews in the Gulf region through the end of the year. The Washington Conservation Corps is a job training program for young people ages 18 to 25. (Cathy Duchamp)

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NASCC Washington Update: September 30, 2005

Montana Corps to Assist in Hurricane Relief. Crews from the Montana Conservation Corps are expected to join those from the Washington Conservation Corps on the ground in the Gulf Coast region work next week to assist in hurricane recovery efforts. We anticipate crews from additional corps will be joining them in the coming weeks. Thanks to Jono McKinney and his team for joining the corps relief effort!

Department of Ecology Press Release - September 22, 2005

05-237

State sends Conservation Corps to assist with Katrina relief

OLYMPIA - The Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) will hit the road today, heading to Mississippi with WCC pick-up trucks loaded with pumps, generators and chain saws to help out with Hurricane Katrina relief efforts.

Department of Ecology Director Jay Manning will bid good bye and good luck to 24 WCC crew members and their supervisors today at the Ecology headquarters building in Lacey. Manning's Ecology Department oversees the WCC program, through which young adults earn job training and college tuition.

The move is the state's largest non-military deployment to the relief effort. The largest deployment was sent by the Washington Army National Guard.

"I am honored to send these highly trained young people to assist in such a dire time of need," said Jay Manning, Ecology Department director. "Our Washington Conservation Corps members are highly skilled and are prepared to respond to disasters. For the last 15 years they have responded to forest fires, oil spills, floods, hurricanes and tornados, so this is what they do best."

Manning noted that WCC crews logged 15,000 hours of response time in Florida in 2004.

The WCC crews will first head to Biloxi and Jackson in southern Mississippi, where they will assist with unloading and dispersing goods and materials arriving from across the nation and around the world.

Eventually, they will secure tarps on damaged roofs and will assist with minor home repair alongside the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and various non-profit groups. These combined efforts will focus on the elderly, disabled and other special-needs people. In addition, WCC crews will assist in damage assessment surveys and support collaboration among the many volunteer groups participating in the relief effort.

The first crew leaves today, according to Rob Spath, who manages the WCC program for Ecology. The crew will return home after 30 days and will be replaced by another crew. The crews will cycle through the project every 30 days until the mission is completed, he said. Spath expects the assignment to last until the end of the year and that the next wave might increase to 40 crew members.

Some of the funding for WCC crew members salaries comes from a grant from Americorps. Travel, lodging, food and crew supervisor salaries and gear costs are reimbursed through the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Americorps is part of the rapid-response plan within the Department of Homeland Security.

The Washington Conservation Corps was established in 1983 as a job training program for young adults from the ages of 18-25. The WCC is a continuation of the legacy left by the Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930s. The program provides work experience and skills for projects that support conservation, rehabilitation, and enhancement of the states natural, historic, environmental and recreational resources.

Today the WCC has more than 125 members working on projects in every part of the state.

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Note to editors: Here are names and home towns of WCC crew members who are participating in this effort (* denotes supervisors).

Bob Milner, * Wenatchee
Ben Valdez, Wenatchee
William Sand, Wenatchee
Stephen Whetherhult, Tucson, Arizona
Apollo Stone, Tucson Arizona
Kevin Robbins, Montesano

Michael Koenen, * Bellingham
Justin Lamb, Bellingham
Amber Smith, Bellingham
David Phinney-Johnson, Kalamazoo, Michigan
Krista Megal, Bellingham
Brittany Melo, Bellingham

Rob Crawford, * Burlington
William Simpson, Spokane
Ben Betz, Olympia
Jackie Gauthier, Burlington
Vanessa Lott, Deming
Dalton Goodwin, Olympia

Ted Dewees, * Olympia
James Herbert, Baltimore, Maryland
Kim Hernandez, Olympia
Chris Humann, Lafayette, California
Ronnie Hoover, Olympia
Joseph Phelan, Olympia

Contact: Sandy Howard, acting communications director, 360-407-7004; cell 360-791-9830

Ecology's Web site about WCC crews:

<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/wcc/index.html>

State crew Mississippi-bound

by John Dodge

The Olympian

LACEY — Two dozen members of the Washington Conservation Corps hit the road Thursday, headed to Jackson and Biloxi, Miss., to help with Hurricane Katrina relief efforts.

It marked the state's largest, nonmilitary deployment to the relief effort in the Gulf states area poleaxed by the hurricane more than three weeks ago.

The six-member crews and four trucks loaded with generators, chain saws, carpentry tools and water pumps are expected to reach southern Mississippi on Monday, unless Hurricane Rita forces a detour.

Olympia members

Six of the crew members are from Olympia, including Kim Hernandez, 21, and Ronnie Hoover, 20.

"It's going to be a humbling experience, but I'm pretty excited to go," Hernandez said just before the trucks rolled out of the state Department of Ecology headquarters in Lacey.

Hoover hired on with the conservation corps last week, enticed in part by the hurricane relief assignment.

"It made it more interesting," he said. "I'm excited and about as ready as I can be."

The crews will be on rotating 30-day assignments at least through the end of the year, unloading and dispersing relief supplies, assisting with minor home repairs, fixing tarps on damaged roofs, clearing downed trees and limbs, all with a focus on elderly, disabled and other special-needs people.

"You're embarking on a helluva adventure," Ecology Director Jay Manning told the young adults enrolled in the corps. "Take care of yourselves — it's unbelievable what you're taking on."

All of the corps members headed for the hurricane disaster zone are going willingly, noted Rob Spath, a WCC program director for Ecology.

"They'll remember this for the rest of their lives," he said.

Disaster response is part of the conservation corps mission. In 2004, WCC members logged 15,000 hours in Florida, working on hurricane relief efforts there.

Some of the funding for the disaster response teams comes from a grant from AmeriCorps, which is part of the rapid-response plan within the federal Department of Homeland Security.

Travel, lodging, food, gear and crew supervisor costs are reimbursed through the Federal Emergency

Management Agency.

With about 20 percent of Ecology's corps members sent to the South, some corps projects in this state will have to wait, including some noxious weed-control work with The Nature Conservancy and trail building at Mount Rainier National Park, Spath said.

The next corps deployment to the stricken Gulf states could be as high as 40 members, Spath said.



[Enlarge Photo](#)

Tony Overman/The Olympian

Washington Conservation Corps workers (from left) Vanessa Lott of Bellingham, Apollo Stone of Knobnoster, Mo., and Jacquie Gauthier of Sedro Woolley, load gear into a truck Thursday afternoon as they prepare to leave for Hurricane Katrina relief from the Department of Ecology headquarters in Lacey.

Conservation Corps

The Washington Conservation Corps was created in 1983 as a job-training program for young adults ages 18 to 25.

Today, the WCC has 125 members working on projects in every part of the state, restoring and enhancing the state's natural, historic, environmental and recreational resources. The WCC is patterned after the Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930s.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, November 04, 2004

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AmeriCorps Tribal Teams from Western U.S. To Assist in Florida Hurricane Recovery Efforts

Three teams of the AmeriCorps*Tribal Civilian Community Corps (AmeriCorps*TCCC) are heading to Florida to assist in disaster recovery efforts that are continuing to address damage caused by summer hurricanes. The teams will arrive in Florida today and tomorrow.

The 10-member teams will serve with the Federal Emergency Management Agency during their 20-day deployment. They will be working on a project with FEMA, the Christian Contractors Association, and the Army Corps of Engineers to protect homes by covering damaged roofs with plastic sheeting. Other AmeriCorps programs involved in the recovery effort include the Washington Conservation Corps and AmeriCorps*TCCC's sister program, AmeriCorps*National Civilian Community Corps (AmeriCorps*NCCC). Thus far, the recovery effort has covered the roofs of more than 1,500 homes that are awaiting permanent repairs.

"This project is an opportunity for AmeriCorps*TCCC members to respond to a vital need while working alongside other dedicated AmeriCorps members," said Rosie Mauk, director of AmeriCorps. "The project is a great example of collaboration between different parts of AmeriCorps. Since August, we have been sending teams of AmeriCorps members to help the recovery efforts. The involvement of AmeriCorps*TCCC is particularly noteworthy because it is the first time that teams from all three reservations have been deployed together, so it will be a time of learning for them as well as providing essential support to people in need."

The AmeriCorps*TCCC teams are based at three different reservations: the Hoopa reservation in California, the Navajo reservation in Arizona, and the Tanana Chiefs Conference in the Doyon region of Alaska. AmeriCorps*TCCC is a 10-month residential program that deploys teams of members to undertake short-term service projects identified by the sponsoring tribes. Projects include home renovation and repair, cultural site restoration, mentoring younger people, and environmental improvements. For many of the AmeriCorps*TCCC members, this trip will be their first time out of their own communities.

AmeriCorps is administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service, which also oversees Senior Corps and Learn and Serve America. The programs of the Corporation engages nearly two million Americans each year in meeting critical needs in education, the environment, public safety, homeland security, and other areas. Together with the USA Freedom Corps, the Corporation is working to build a culture of service, citizenship, and responsibility in America. For more information, visit www.nationalservice.gov.

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URL: http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/newsroom/releases_detail.asp?tbl_pr_id=58

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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October 7, 2005

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National Service and ABC's 'Good Morning America' Kick Off
Joint Effort to Help Rebuild Hurricane-Ravaged Mississippi Town

WASHINGTON - The Corporation for National and Community Service, which oversees the AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and Learn and Serve America programs, last week kicked off its yearlong collaboration with the ABC television program "Good Morning America" and the Salvation Army to help rebuild the town of Pass Christian, Miss., by removing 355 tons of debris from a residential street located less than a hundred yards from where Hurricane Katrina came on shore in late August.

The storm - which hit the historic Gulf Coast town, located about 15 miles west of Biloxi, with winds of up to 145 miles per hour and a sea surge of nearly 30 feet - destroyed or left unusable nearly 75 percent of residents' homes and 100 percent of the town's businesses. In addition, much of the town's infrastructure - including utilities, fire and police stations, city vehicles, and public works buildings - were destroyed.

To mark the start of the collaborative effort, more than 70 AmeriCorps members - including 30 from AmeriCorps St. Louis, 24 from the Washington State Conservation Corps, and 22 from Denver campus of AmeriCorps*National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) - participated in an intensive daylong cleanup of Seal Avenue. With support of dump trucks and heavy equipment provided by the Mississippi Department of Transportation, the AmeriCorps members removed 55 truckloads of brush and debris - approximately 355 tons' worth - in less than a day. In addition, a team of AmeriCorps members helped local residents empty their homes of furniture, appliances, clothing, and personal effects that had been destroyed by mud, muck, and water.

"In times of crisis, citizens and volunteers make up the backbone of support for people and communities in need," said David Eisner, CEO of the Corporation. "It will take many months, if not years, to recover from such a devastating disaster. We applaud 'Good Morning America' for committing to helping rebuild Pass Christian, and we look forward to working with them and with our other partners to help this town, indeed the entire Gulf region, get back on its feet as quickly as possible."

Pass Christian is "Good Morning America" co-anchor Robin Roberts' hometown, which prompted the show to focus its efforts there. The Corporation was asked to be a partner because of its expertise in organizing and managing volunteers, its experience with disaster relief, and its proven ability to help people rebuild their homes and lives.

Also participating in the rebuilding effort is the Salvation Army, which will help coordinate donations of money, goods, and services.

"These guys are relentless," said Roberts of the AmeriCorps members during a live broadcast from Pass Christian on September 28. "I can't tell you the psychological boost that these people have given to my hometown - and they're going to stay here and continue to do the work here that is so desperately needed."

For at the next year, participants from all of the Corporation's programs - AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and Learn and Serve America - will be involved in the long-term recovery effort in the town, which before the storm had been home to 6,600 people. Over the course of the next several months, national service participants and other community volunteers will help clean out and disinfect residents' homes, tarp roofs, provide information to townspeople on available resources, tutor and mentor students in afterschool programs, and build and repair housing, among many other activities.

The next immediate project will be helping the Army Corps of Engineers and the Navy Seabees set up office and class space at DeLisle Elementary School, the only remaining public school in Pass Christian. The school, which flooded but did not sustain significant damage, will become the campus for all local schoolchildren in grades K-12. In addition, the team of AmeriCorps members in Pass Christian will be helping to salvage documents, school supplies, and other materials from the former high school, which was flooded and rendered unusable by the storm.

Throughout the year, the Corporation will document the rebuilding effort on the <http://www.nationalservice.gov/passchristian> website. Photographs from the first project, as well as additional information on the partnership, can be found there as well. The Corporation for National and Community Service provides opportunities for Americans of all ages and backgrounds to serve their communities and country through three programs: Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America. Together with the USA Freedom Corps, the Corporation is working to build a culture of citizenship, service, and responsibility in America. For more information, visit <http://www.nationalservice.gov>.